

THE HAND OF

FATE

NOV.
10c

WHAT STRANGE SPELL HAVE YOU PUT
ON ME, YOU EVIL WITCH ? SOMETHING
IS STRANGLING ME... SQUEEZING
THE LIFE FROM ME... BUT I
CAN'T SEE ANYTHING !



"There's no such animal," he cried!



MY FRIEND and I were picking the horses one day when I started telling him about a sure thing I heard about.

"You say it pays four cents for every three?" he asked.

"Yep," I replied.

"And can't lose? It automatically must be illegal!"

"Not a bit," I replied. "In fact, the government very much approves..."

"Our government approves of a horse who can't lose..."

"Who said anything about a horse?" I asked.

"So what else could it be but a horse...?"

"It not only could be—but is—U.S. Savings Bonds," was my prompt reply. "The surest thing running on any track today.

"For every three dollars you invest in U.S. Savings Bonds you get four dollars back after only ten years. And if you're a member of the Payroll Savings Plan—which means you buy bonds automatically from your paycheck—that can amount to an awful lot of money when you're not looking. Hey, what are you doing?"

"Teasing up my racing form! The horse has betting on from now on is U.S. Savings Bonds."

Automatic saving is sure saving—U.S. Savings Bonds



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The SPIRITS Sing Tonight

OUT OF THE DARKNESS SURROUNDING LIFE, POWERS LYING AT OUR SIDE MAY SUDDENLY REVEAL THEMSELVES, AND WE ARE HELPLESS IN THEIR HANDS, EXPOSED TO ALL THE UNKNOWN POSSIBILITIES OF A SHIVER UNDER WORLD. JEAN RANDALL, A YOUNG AMERICAN GIRL WHO CAME TO PARIS TO CONTINUE HER STUDIES TO BE A SINGER, HAD BEGUN TO FEEL THESE STRANGE INFLUENCES IN HER SOGGY LITTLE ATTIC STUDIO ROOM IN MONTMARTRE, BUT NOT UNTIL THE DAY OF HER HUMILIATING FAILURE, WHEN SHE THREW OUT FOR THE CHORUS OF AN OPERA COMPANY, DID THE EVIL FORCE REALLY BEGIN TO OPERATE IN HER AFFAIRS.

WHY MUST MY TIME BE WASTED LIKE THIS? MY DEAR MADMOISELLE RANDALL— GO BACK TO AMERICA! FORGET ABOUT SINGING! YOU HAVE NO VOICE! YOU WASTE YOUR OWN TIME— AND MINE!



I BELIEVE WE LIVE IN THE SAME BUILDING IN THE RUE DE FLEURBAUD, MADMOISELLE. I HAVE LIVED THERE MANY YEARS, AND I HAVE HELPED MANY YOUNG SINGERS WHO HAVE BEEN REJECTED BY OTHERS AS FAILED!

I AM A FAILURE! MY MONEY IS GONE, AND SO ARE MY DREAMS OF BEING A REAL SINGER!

MY NAME IS COUNT ROMPPE! I ASSUME YOU, MY CHILD, IF YOU PUT YOURSELF IN MY HANDS, I WILL MAKE YOU A GREAT SINGER!



AM HAVING SOME OF MY PUPILS
AT MY STUDIO TONIGHT FOR A
LITTLE BATHING! WHY DO YOU
NOT JOIN US, AND BE WELCOMED
INTO OUR RANGEL?

THANK YOU,
COUNT ROMPRE! I
DON'T KNOW WHY YOU
SHOULD BOTHER, WHEN
MONSIEUR LAURENT
SEEMED TO THINK I
WAS SO HOPELESS!

IT IS THE HOPELESS ONES I
FIND IT EASIEST TO TAKE UNDER
MY WING, MADAMESELLE! SO I
SHALL EXPECT YOU TONIGHT!
MY STUDIO IS DIRECTLY UNDER
YOUR OWN!

I--I'LL BE
THERE!

AH, BEYOND, THEN, FOR THE PRESENT,
I HAVE AN APPOINTMENT ELSE-
WHERE, BUT I SHALL SEE YOU
TONIGHT-- AT MIDNIGHT!

I'M LUCKY--THE COUNT HAS TAKEN AN INTEREST
IN ME, AND YET-- THERE IS SOMETHING STRANGE
ABOUT HIM!

I'VE FELT IT EACH TIME I'VE PASSED HIM
ON THE STAIRS: I GET A SORT OF COLD CHILL,
AND WHEN I PASS THE CLOSED DOOR OF HIS
STUDIO, I HEAR BEAUTIFUL VOICES ISSUING FROM
THERE, BUT THEY MAKE ME FEEL FUNNY!

NO, JEAN-- YOUR FEELING ABOUT
THE COUNT WAS NOT YOUR IMAGI-
NATION! YOU SHOULD SEE HIM NOW
AS HE KEEPS HIS "APPOINTMENT"!
PERHAPS YOU OUGHT TO PACK UP,
JEAN, AND RETURN TO AMSTER-
DAM SAFELY, WHILE THERE IS STILL TIME!

I MUST ASSEMBLE
THE GUESTS FOR MY
PARTY!

COME FORTH, GEORGES
DES MOREAUX! TONIGHT
YOU ARE AGAIN!

YES,
MASTER!

FROM TOMB TO TOMB, AND GRAVE TO GRAVE, THE COUNT JUMPED HIS BRILLIANT SISTER!



"COME FORTH, DELESTE BOYER! / TONIGHT YOU SHALL AGAIN BIRD THE SONGS YOU LOVED SO WELL!"

"YES, MASTER!"

MEANWHILE, JEAN RETURNED TO HER LODGINGS IN MONTMARTRE, AND FOUND AN OLD FRIEND FROM HOME WAITING HER...



"BOB MARTIN / WHERE DID YOU COME FROM?"



"I CAME FROM THE GOOD OLD U.S.A., OF COURSE -- JUST TO SEE YOU! LOOK, HONEY -- GIVE UP THIS IDEA OF A SINGING CAREER, AND COME BACK HOME AND MARRY ME!"

"BUT IF I GIVE UP NOW, IT'S ALWAYS FEEL THAT IT'S PASSED UP SOMETHING THAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN MY BIG OPPORTUNITY!"



"YOU CERTAINLY COULDN'T ENJOY LYING IN THIS MOULD, CREEPY JOINT!"

"IT'S ARTISTIC! A LOT OF FAMOUS SINGERS AND COMPOSERS USED TO LIVE HERE!"



"AND A REAL COUNT LIVES RIGHT HERE IN THE STUDIO ROOM UNDER MINE! HE'S A MUSICAL IMPRESARIO, AND HE'S OFFERED TO TAKE OVER MY CAREER! HE'S GIVING A PARTY TONIGHT TO INTRODUCE ME TO SOME FAMOUS SINGERS!"



"THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT THIS PLACE THAT MAKES MY FLESH CRAWL, BUT IF THIS IS WHAT YOU WANT, YOU'RE WELCOME TO IT!"

"BOB, I WISH YOU'D GO TO THE PARTY WITH ME TONIGHT! IF YOU MEET SOME REAL SINGERS, MAYBE YOU'LL UNDERSTAND BETTER WHAT I HOPE TO BE!"



"OKAY, I'LL STAY FOR THE PARTY! I'D LIKE TO SEE THIS COUNT THE ONCE-OVER! HE SOUNDS LIKE A FIGHT TO ME, AND YOU MAY BE GETTING INTO SOMETHING YOU CAN'T HANDLE!"



JEAN DID NOT ADMIT TO BOB HER OWN FOREBODING ABOUT COUNT ROMPRE, BECAUSE SHE WAS NOW STUBBORNLY DETERMINED TO ACCEPT THE COUNT'S OFFER, BUT SHE WAS GLAD THAT BOB WAS THERE TO GO TO THE COUNT'S PARTY WITH HER, WHEN THEY RAPPED ON THE COUNT'S DOOR AT MIDNIGHT.



I BROUGHT A FRIEND! I HOPE YOU DON'T MIND!

YOUR FRIEND IS WELCOME! I AM SURE HE WILL ENJOY HIMSELF!

LET ME INTRODUCE MY FRIENDS--AND PUPILS! EVERYONE HERE DESIRED A SHINOBI GARDEN, AND FOUND IT THROUGH ME! GEORGES DES MOREAUX, CELESTE D'AVRIL, ROLAND GREGORY, MADAME VERDOT.



JUST A MINUTE.



YOU'VE GOT A LOT OF FACES DRESSED UP HERE--BECAUSE GEORGES DES MOREAUX AND CELESTE D'AVRIL HAVE BEEN DEAD AT LEAST A HUNDRED YEARS!



IMBECILE! YOU DARE CALL US DEAD? COUNT ROMPRE HAS MADE US IMMORTAL! FOR THAT INSULT YOU SHALL PAY!

IMMORTAL! IMMORTAL!



IT--IT'S LIKE HITTING SOFT CLAY! WHAT? HE'S TURNING INTO A CORPSE!

EEEEEE!!!



WHEN SHE GAZED LOOK, THE SIGHT WAS MORE THAN JEAN COULD STAND, AND SHE FAINTED AWAY.



OHNN!

AGHHHH!



WHEN JEAN Woke UP, SHE WAS IN HER OWN LITTLE GLOOMY ATTIC ROOM, AND IT WAS MORNING.



LAST NIGHT... THE COUNT... THE CORPSES... BOB! IT MUST HAVE BEEN A NIGHTMARE!

SUCH THINGS DON'T HAPPEN,
BUT IT SEEMED SO REAL!



JEAN FORCED HERSELF TO
KAP ON THE COUNT'S DOOR.
WHEN THERE WAS NO
ANSWER, SHE BANGED TWY
THE DOOR. IT OPENED...

WHY, IT'S EMPTY! CORNERS!
DUST! IT LOOKS AS THOUGH NO
ONE HAD LIVED HERE FOR YEARS!



WERE YOU
LOOKING FOR
ME, MY DEAR?



EYAAAAH!
I-I DON'T
UNDERSTAND THAT!
I MUST GET
AWAY!



JEAN RUSHED FOR THE STAIRS. SHE
TRIPPED, AND BUMPED HER HEAD...



THROUGH THE DARKNESS, SHE SEEMED TO
SEE THE COUNT'S SMILEY MUCKING FACE
AND THE STRANGE HEADS OF DEATH SHE
HAD SEEN BEFORE...



THEN SUDDENLY
THE DARKNESS
WENT AWAY...



MADAMEBELLE! HOW
UNFORTUNATE! YOU
MUST HAVE STUMBLED AS
YOU CAME IN THE DOOR!

I HOPE YOU DID
NOT HURT YOURSELF!
YOU RAPPED ON THE
DOOR-- I OPENED IT--
AND SUDDENLY YOU
FELL!

WON'T I-- I CAME
HERE LAST NIGHT, WITH
SOB! DREAFFUL THINGS
HAPPENED! TOMY-- I
CAME-- THERE WAS
NOTHING HERE!



MY DEAR, I
INVITED YOU TO
A PARTY AT MID-
NIGHT! IT IS MID-
NIGHT, AND YOU
CAME! YOU WERE
NEVER HERE
BEFORE!



BUT I REMEMBER--I CAME NONE--IT WAS LAST NIGHT-- NOB WAS HERE--OH, I'M CONFUSED!

PERHAPS SOME MUSIC WILL SOOTHE YOU/COME--LET US SING!



THE VOICES--THEY ARE THE ONES I USED TO HEAR FROM HERE--BEAUTIFUL, BUT SOMEHOW TERRIFYING--HOLLOW--AS THOUGH THEY CAME FROM THE GRAVE!



YOU HAVE HEARD SINGING SUCH AS FEN EVER HEARD NOW YOU WILL SING, AS YOU HAVE NEVER SANG BEFORE! YOU WILL LIFT YOUR VOICE WITH THE OTHERS AND SING AS I COMMAND!

YES, YES--I WILL LIFT MY VOICE WITH THE OTHERS AND SING AS YOU - COMMAND!



OH, NO--YOU WON'T SING, JEAN! NOT WITH THIS UNHOLY GRAVE-WARD CREW! THEY SING ONLY AT HIS BEEDING, BECAUSE THEY SOLD THEIR SOULS TO HIM! THEY MUST RETURN FROM THE DEAD AND SING WHEN HE COMMANDS IT!



I THOUGHT YOU HAD DESTROYED HIM LAST NIGHT! DESTROY HIM NOW!

YOUR CREATURE GRABBED ME TO THE CEMETERY, BUT BEFORE THEY COULD PULL ME INTO ONE OF THEIR GRAVES, DARK CAME, AND THEY HAD TO LEAVE ME!



MASTER! SAVE US! WE ARE DOOMED!



THE COURT CAN'T SAVE YOU OR HIMSELF NOW! YOU'RE DOOMED--AS YOU WERE DOOMED WHEN YOU GOT INTO HIS CLUTCHES WHEN YOU WERE ALIVE! NOW--EXPLAIN WHAT THIS IS ALL ABOUT!

WHEN THE COUNT CALLS US FROM THE GRAVE TO SIN AGAIN, IT IS ALL WE HAVE! WE HAVE TRIED TO TELL OURSELVES HE HAS MADE US IMMORTAL, BUT WE KNOW WE ARE NOTHING BUT THE EVIL CREATURES HE USES TO SHARE OTHER AMBITIOUS POOLS!



IF THE GIRL HAD SUNG WITH US, SHE WOULD HAVE MADE HERSELF ONE OF US--THOSE WHO BELONG TO COUNT ROMPRE, AND WHO SING--IN DEATH!



AS THE FLAMES TURNED THE ROOM INTO A RAGING INFERNO, BOB FOUGHT HIS WAY TO THE DOOR. THE WHOLE HOUSE STRUCTURE WAS NOW AFLAME, AND BEHIND THEM THEY SEEMED TO HEAR A FINAL, MILD DEATH-SING OF ADONT. . .



REACHING THE SAFETY OF THE STREET, BOB AND JEAN WATCHED THE PLACE BURN. . .



MANY STRUGGLING YOUNG SINGERS HAVE LIVED IN THAT HOUSE! SOME OF THEM STARVED TO DEATH--SOME ACHIEVED FAME! AND ONCE A STRANGE COUNT HAD A STUDIO THERE!



IT WAS ALMOST A HUNDRED YEARS AGO! HIS NAME WAS COUNT ROMPRE, AND GOSPEL SAID HE WAS ONE OF THE DEVIL'S BAND, WITH STRANGE, EVIL POWERS THAT FEED UPON AMBITIOUS SINGERS! THE PEOPLE HERE BROVE HIM AWAY! HIS STUDIO HAS BEEN EMPTY ALL THESE YEARS! THEY SAY HE STILL VISITS THE HOUSE AND USES THE STUDIO, BUT I SUPPOSE THAT'S JUST SUPERSTITIOUS GOSPEL!



OH, BOB-- IF YOU HADN'T COME TO SAVE ME, I WOULD HAVE BEEN ONE OF THOSE WHOSE SOULS BELONGED TO COUNT ROMPRE!

WE'LL GO TO AMERICA, MY DARLING, AND LEAVE THIS NIGHTMARE BEHIND US--AND TRY TO FORGET!



A Hand of FATE

#14

Mystery

ONE OF THE WILDEST EVENTS EVER TO OCCUR IN EUROPE IS RECORDED IN THE FILES OF THE PARIS POLICE IN OCTOBER, 1927. A MURDERING MADMAN ROAMED THE STREETS OF PARIS, PREYING ON INNOCENT PEOPLE. THE POLICE WERE ON A CONSTANT HUNT FOR THE KILLER, BUT HE ALWAYS MANAGED TO ELUDE THEM. BUT ONE NIGHT TWO NEWBORN HAPPENED UPON THE MURDERER IN THE ACT OF COMMITTING A CRIME.



WHEN THE PEOPLE OF PARIS LEARNED OF THIS STRANGE COINCIDENCE, THEY WERE AMAZED! MANY BELIEVED THAT THE HAND OF FATE HAD SPANNED THE LONG YEARS TO BRING JUSTICE TO A KILLER AT THE HANDS OF A MAX EXECUTIONER, WHO, THIRTY YEARS BEFORE, HAD CARRIED OUT THE DEATH PENALTY ON HIS FATHER. THE CASE WAS CLOSED AND FILED IN THE BAFFLING CRIME RECORDS OF THE PARIS POLICE!

THE END

OHMY IT WAS THE MOST LOATHSOME THING I
EVER SAW-- AND IT WAS CRAWLING OUT OF THE
GRAVE!



I HEARD SOME-
BODY SCREAM /
SOME THING
WRONG, MISS F



TH- THERE!
LOOK!

WHAT THE...!



STATE SAW THE CORSA WHO ITSELF ABOUT THE HELP-
LESS MAN

HELP /
AGH HHHH /

IT-IT'S TOO HORRIBLE!
I CAN'T LOOK!



OH, THAT POOR MAN! AND
THERE IS NO ONE AROUND TO
HELP! I'VE GOT TO GET HELP
FOR HIM!



I'VE DROVE INTO TOWN AND WENT
RIGHT TO MRS. JEFFERSON'S OFFICE...

TATER--BARGE-- YOU MUST COME
BACK WITH ME TO THE CEMETERY /
A CORSA--CRAWLING OUT OF YOUR
WIFE RAE'S GRAVE/IT ATTACKED
ONE OF THE CEMETERY
WORKERS!

A-A
CORSA?



WHY DO YOU
HAVE TO KEEP
GOING TO RAE'S
GRAVE, ANTHONY?
I WANT TO FOR-
GET SHE EVER
EXISTED!

I-I DON'T
UNDERSTAND!
YOU HARRIED
HER! NOW
THAT SHE'S
DEAD, IT DOES
NOT SEEM FAIR
TO JUST LEAVE
HER THERE
ALONE!



HE'VE GOT TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT THE COMRA!

FORGIVE ME FOR BEING UPSET, DAN-LINE! BUT VISITING DAN'S GRAVE HAS MADE YOU HYSTERICAL. YOU KNOW YOU JUST IMAGINED SEEING A COMRA!

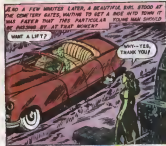


IT WASN'T MY IMAGINATION! IT'S THERE, I TELL YOU! AND THAT POOR MAN IS PROBABLY BEYOND HELP NOW! I'LL GET A RESCUE PARTY TO GO BACK WITH ME, IF YOU WON'T DO ANYTHING!

I'LL GO WITH YOU, KATE--BUT WE MUST NOT ALARM THE TOWN! I'LL GO WITH YOU AND TAKE MY GUN!



IT WAS HARD FOR KATE TO UNDERSTAND KATE'S STRANGE AFFECTION AND HIS WANTING TO KEEP HER STAY ABOUT THE COMRA FROM THE TOWN. WHILE HE AND KATE STARTED BACK TO THE CEMETERY, THE EVIL MONSTER LACER BURNING ITS COILS FROM ITS NEST...



AND A FEW MINUTES LATER, A BEAUTIFUL EVIL STOOD AT THE CEMETERY GATES, WAITING TO GET A BOSS INTO TOWN. IT WAS FASTER THAT THIS PARTICULAR YOUNG MAN SHOULD BE PASSING BY AT THAT MOMENT.

WANT A LIFT?

WHY--YES, THANK YOU!



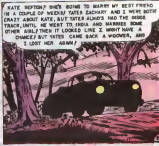
YOU'RE A STRANGER IN TOWN, AREN'T YOU? WHAT ARE YOU DOING OUT HERE AT THE CEMETERY?

SOMEONE WHO WAS VERY CLOSE TO ME IS BURIED THERE!



MY NAME IS GEORGE BRIDGEMAN! ARE YOU VISITING WITH SOMEONE HERE IN TOWN? I HOPE YOU'LL LET ME SEE YOU AGAIN!

THAT WOULD BE VERY NICE! I SHALL BE STAYING WITH A YOUNG LADY NAMED KATE DEFTON. DO YOU KNOW HER?



KATE DEFTON? SHE'S GOING TO MARRY MY BEST FRIEND IN A COUPLE OF WEEKS! TATER ZACHARY AND I WERE BOTH CRAZY ABOUT KATE, BUT TATER ALWAYS HAD THE INSIDE TRACK, UNTIL HE WENT TO INDIA AND MARRIED SOME OTHER GIRL! THEN IT LOOKED LIKE I MIGHT HAVE A CHANCE! BUT TATER CAME BACK A WEEKEND, AND I LOST HER AGAIN!

WHEN KATE AND KATES GOT BACK TO THE CEMETERY...

OH, HOW GRASPABLE I KNEW HE WOULD BE TOO LATE! KATES--IT'S ONLY FAIR TO LET PEOPLE KNOW THAT SOMETHING DANGEROUS AND HORRIBLE IS GOING ON IN THEIR MINDS!



KATE--GO ON HOME AND LET ME LOOK FOR THIS THING--AND DON'T SAY ANYTHING TO ANYONE ABOUT IT! I UNDERSTAND COURAGE! I LEARNED A LOT ABOUT THEM IN INDIA!



INDIA? OH, KATES--DO YOU SUPPOSE IT SOMEHOW GOT INTO YOUR WIFE'S COFFIN AND JUST NOW GOT LOOSE?

KATE HAD NEVER SEEN INFERIOR LIFE! IT WAS AS THOUGH HE HAD SUDDENLY COME FACING WITH RAGE AND FEAR!

GO HOME, YOU SILLY LITTLE POOL! AND KEEP YOUR MOUTH CLOSED!



OH!

TERRIFIED AND UPSET, KATE WENT HOME, WHERE SHE FOUND A VISITOR WAITING FOR HER...

WHY--WHO ARE YOU?

I'M A FRIEND OF KATES ZACHARY! I KNEW HIS WIFE VERY WELL!



HOW STRANGE THAT YOU SHOULD COME TODAY! TELL ME ABOUT KATES' WIFE! WHAT WAS SHE LIKE?



SHE WAS LIKE-- THIS! ZW! ZW!



WHY, KATE--WHERE ARE YOU RUNNING TO? BROUGHT A BEAUTIFUL GIRL TO YOUR HOUSE WHILE ABO, AND SHE PROMISED ME A DATE TONIGHT! BUT SHE DIDN'T GIVE ME HER NAME!



CHERISHED? I... SHE...

**KATE POURED OUT HER HEART--
-ABLE STORY...**

YOU MUSTN'T GO
IN THERE, GEORGE! THE VENOM SHE
SPITS CAN BLIND OR PARALYZE YOU!
AND IF YOU GET WITHIN STRIKING
DISTANCE, SHE'LL KILL YOU! I
CAN'T EXPLAIN IT, BUT I'M SURE
IT'S TRUE!
WIFE!

IT'S THE CRAZIEST
THING I EVER HEARD!



I'M GOING TO SEE FOR MYSELF!
I'LL TAKE THIS STICK, JUST
IN CASE!

GEORGE--PLEASE
COME BACK!



YOU'RE A LITTLE EARLY FOR
OUR DATE, MY FRIEND!



I AM AFRAID I WILL
HAVE TO SEE YOU LATER--
AT THE CEMETERY!

WHA?



HISSE
ZHU!
ZHU!
ZHU!

I DON'T LIKE TO HIT A LADY,
BUT YOU AREN'T GIVING ME
MUCH CHOICE!



LET'S GET OUT OF HERE!
WE'LL GO TO THE CEMETERY AND
GET AN EXPLANATION FROM
TATER! HE MUST KNOW MORE
THAN HE TOLD YOU!



YES, YES-- THE CEMETERY! I
SHALL MEET YOU ALL AT THE
CEMETERY!





SO YOU CAME BACK, KATE--
AND BROUGHT GEORGE WITH YOU /
INTERFERING FOOLS! GET OUT,
BEFORE I SHOOT YOU!

DON'T BE AN IDIOT!
TELL US THE TRUTH
ABOUT THIS SHASTLY
THING, SO WE
CAN HELP
YOU!



THE TRUTH IS--I MARRIED
A GIBB WITH THE SOUL OF
A COBRA! NOT UNTIL WE
WERE MARRIED DID I
REALIZE THAT SHE WAS A
ONE-DEVIL WHO COULD CHANGE
AS WILL INTO A POISONOUS
SNAKE! SHE KILLED PEOPLE
BEFORE MY EYES, AND I KNEW
I WOULD BE NEXT!



"AND SO, ONE NIGHT, WHEN SHE
SLEPT IN HUMAN FORM, I STRAN-
GLED HER AND NAILED HER INTO
A COFFIN! I DARED NOT LEAVE
THE COFFIN BEHIND, SO I BROUGHT
IT HERE WITH ME, NEVER DREAM-
ING THAT HER EVIL POWER STILL
REMAINED! AND NOW, SOMEDAY,
SHE HAS FREED HERSELF!"



NOW, YOU TWO KNOW MY HORRIBLE SECRET!
IT WILL DIE WITH YOU!

YATES!
HE!



SORRY, OLD MAN--BUT YOU
AREN'T KILLING ANYONE!

OH!



YATES--WHY NOT
LET US HELP YOU
FIGHT THIS THING?

IT--IT'S TOO HOR-
RIBLE! I NEVER
WANTED ANYONE
TO KNOW!



AHH!
HELP!

MY GUN! WHERE IS
MY GUN?



UGH! SLIMY
CREATURE!

GEORGE-- IT WILL
KILL YOU!



HSSSSSSSSSSSS



'YATES! DON'T!
YOU MAY HIT
GEORGE!

HE'S DONE FOR ANOTHER RATE!
THAT DEVIL NEVER LETS A
VICTIM GET AWAY! AND IF
I CAN HIT HER



BANG



THE VEROM!
I- I'M BLIND!
EOWWWW!

THIS SOUTHE
THE CEMETERY
GARDENER
DROPPED...



EEYAAHH!
I'M DONE FOR!
I KNEW IT WOULD
END LIKE THIS!

THE EMPTY COFFIN OF
YATES' WIFE ONCE MORE
HAD AN OCCUPANT. THE
LIFELESS BODY OF THE
COWARD THIS TIME IT
WOULD HAVE NO MORE TO
SPREAD FEAR. DESTRUCTION
NOW WOULD IT BE LONELY,
BECAUSE NOW THE BODY
OF THE MAN WHO HAD
MARRIED THE COWARD WAS
RESTED INSIDE HER. HIS
UNHAPPY ADVENTURE
WITH THE MYSTERIOUS
FORCES OF THE UNKNOWN
OVER AT LAST!



NO ESCAPE *from* NIGHTMARE

AT LAST! AFTER YEARS OF STUDY AND PRACTICE, I HAVE LEARNED TO SEPARATE MY MIND AND BODY--AND THIS ASTRAL BODY CAN GO WHERE--EVEN I SEND IT!



BEWARE, RAMON BLASSON! YOU ARE TREADING AN UN-NATURAL AND DANGEROUS PATH!

DEATH, TOLL AND IGNORANCE OF THE FUTURE ARE THE FATE OF MAN UPON THIS SPHERE, BUT THROUGH THE AGES HE HAS SOUGHT TO GREAT DEATH, TO FIND HEALTH AND EASE WITHOUT WORKING FOR IT, AND TO TEAR AWAY THE VEIL THAT SHROUDS THE SECRETS OF THE UNKNOWN WORLD BEYOND. THOSE WHO TANGLE WITH FATE, AND SEEK TO OBTAIN KNOWLEDGE AND POWER THROUGH SUPERNATURAL SOURCES, UNLEASH STRANGE FORCES. THIS IS THE PROFESSOR RAMON BLASSON, A TEACHER OF PSYCHOLOGY IN AN OBSCURE COLLEGE, AS HE EMBARKED UPON A FORTUNABLE ADVENTURE...

AND ALREADY THE POWER I HAVE BUILT UP WITHIN MY MIND IS PIERCING THE MYSTERY OF THINGS HIDDEN FROM ORDINARY MORTALS! WHO ARE YOU THAT SPEAKS TO ME? FROM WHAT WORLD DO YOU COME?



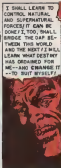
I AM FATE! I BRIDGE THE GAP BETWEEN THIS WORLD AND THE NEXT, HOLDING IN MY GRASP THE SEEDS OF EACH MAN'S DESTINY! WHEN THE THREADS BECOME TANGLED AND KNOTTED, IT MEANS THE MAN IS FIGHTING THAT WHICH HAS BEEN ORDAINED AND CANNOT BE CHANGED!





BEFORE THE THREADS
SPRAKE, I ATTEMPT TO
WARN MEN THAT FATE
METES OUT PUNISHMENT
TO THOSE THAT FIGHT
ME? I AM WARNING
YOU!

THE FACT
THAT I CAN
STAND INCE TO
FACE WITH YOU,
SHOWS THAT I
AM NO ORDINARY
MAN!



I SHALL LEARN TO
CONTROL NATURAL
AND SUPERNATURAL
FORCES! IT CAN BE
DONE! I, TOO, SHALL
BRIDGE THE GAP BE-
TWEEN THIS WORLD
AND THE NEXT! I WILL
LEARN WHAT DESTINY
HAS ORDAINED FOR
ME--AND CHANGE IT
--TO SUIT MYSELF!



AS A TEACHER,
YOU COULD BE
A FORCE OF
GOOD (WHY
DO YOU
CHOOSE
EVIL?)

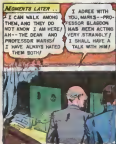
I HAVE WASTED
ENOUGH YEARS TEACH-
ING PSYCHOLOGY IN OB-
SCURE LITTLE COLLEGES!
WHEN I BEGAN SECRETLY
STUDYING OCCULT SCIENCES,
I WAS SEEKING THIS POWER
THAT GIVES ME COMPLETE
CONTROL OVER MY OWN LIFE
AND THE LIVES OF OTHERS!



YOU WILL REMEMBER YOUR
COURSE, RICHARD BLAGDON! BUT
YOU HAVE CHOSEN TO DISREGARD
MY WARNING, AND SO... WE
SHALL MEET AGAIN!



HE HAS GONE! EVEN FATE
KNOWS WHEN HE HAS MET HIS MATCH!
NOW THAT I KNOW WHAT I CAN DO,
NOTHING SHALL STOP ME!



NIGHTS LATER...
I CAN WALK AMONG
THEM, AND THEY DO
NOT KNOW I AM HERE!
AH-- THE DEAN AND
PROFESSOR MARSH!
I HAVE ALWAYS HATED
THEM BOTH!

I AGREE WITH
YOU, MARSH--PRO-
FESSOR BLAGDON
HAS BEEN ACTING
VERY STRANGELY!
I SHALL HAVE A
TALK WITH HIM!



A. RIDEN PATH, AND...

POOR, IGNORANT POOL! THERE
ARE MANY SUCH I WILL DELIGHT IN
GETTING RID OF! AND NO ONE WILL
EVER DREAM I HAD ANYTHING TO DO
WITH IT! HA! HA!

NO DEED IS
DONE THAT IS
NOT RECORDED
BY FATE,
RICHARD!

PROFESSOR MARKS DIED INSTANTLY, HIS NECK BROKEN IN THE FALL... DEAN SUFFERED A BRAIN CONCUSSION AND LAY IN A COMA IN THE HOSPITAL... RAMON BLASON EXULTED IN HIS NEW POWER AND PLANNED NEW EXPERIMENTS...

I WAS SORRY TO HEAR OF YOUR FATHER'S ACCIDENT, LOVE! WHEN YOU'RE ALONE, I HOPE YOU WILL TURN TO ME FOR COMFORT AND ADVICE!



I DON'T EXPECT TO BE ALONE! I'M SURE FATHER WILL RECOVER! AND, OF COURSE, I HAVE FRIENDS!

I HAVE ALWAYS HOPED YOU'D THINK OF ME AS A FRIEND, IF NOT MORE!



OH, COLLEY DARLING... I'M SO GLAD YOU CAME! THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT PROFESSOR BLASON I JUST CAN'T STAND!

HE DOESN'T TEACH PSYCHOLOGY ANY MORE -- HE TEACHES DRUGS! I HEARD YOUR FATHER WAS GETTING READY TO FIRE HIM!



I'VE BEEN INFATUATED WITH LOVE EVER SINCE I CAME HERE TO TEACH! I WILL MAKE HER TURN TO ME!



RAMON BLASON RETURNED TO HIS ROOM...

THERE ARE POWERFUL, EVIL FORCES IN THE UNKNOWN! MY READING HAS SHOWN ME HOW MEN IN THE PAST MADE THESE POWERS WORK FOR THEM! WHEN THEY HAD ONCE LEARNED THE SECRETS I HAVE LEARNED!



NOW THAT MY BODY HAS BECOME THE INSTRUMENT OF MY INTEL-LIGENCE, I CAN PROJECT MY MIND INTO ANY PART OF THE WORLD! I WISH I CAN SUMMON FORTH THE POWERS THAT WILL ENABLE ME TO BRING ABOUT THE RESULTS I DESIRE!

YOU SHOULD HAVE READ BETWEEN THE LINES IN YOUR BOOKS, RAMON! THERE YOU WOULD HAVE LEARNED THAT THE MEN WHO CALLED UPON THE FORCES OF EVIL WERE ULTIMATELY DESTROYED BY THOSE FORCES!



LET RANDALL DEEP CONCENTRATION TRY TO PENETRATE THAT REALM OF DARKNESS THAT LIES BEYOND THE BORDERS OF MEN'S MINDS, THE EVIL PLANE WITHIN HIS BRAIN OF OBEDIENCE TO SOME FEARFUL, UNMORTAL LAW. SUDDENLY ABOUNT INTO BEING THAT WHEN HE BOUGHT!

YOU CALLED US--AND WE ARE HERE!

RANDALL HAD NOT EXPECTED ANYTHING AS HORRIBLE AS THE THINGS THAT NOW MITHER IN FLAMES AROUND HIM!

WHAT DO YOU WANT WITH US?

NOTHING! NOTHING! NOTHING! NOTHING!

THANK HEAVENS--
TH--THEY'RE DEAD!

IT MAY NOT BE QUITE SO EASY TO GET RID OF THEM NEXT TIME, RANDALL!

YOU INTENDED TO ASK THEM FOR THE KIND OF WEALTH THAT WOULD TEMPT A GIRL LIKE LOIS AND MAKE HER NOTICE YOU! YOU INTENDED TO ENLIST THEIR--SO I'M MAKING YOU YOUNG AND HANDSOME LIKE COLBY FERNAND!

BUT THEY FRIGHTENED YOU, DIDN'T THEY? AND YET YOU DESIRE TO FOLLOW IN THEIR STEPS!

I--I DO NOT NEED THEM! I CAN SECURE WHAT I WANT WITHOUT THEM!

YOU SEE FOR YOURSELF THE POWER I HAVE! I BROUGHT THEM FORTH--AND I SENT THEM BACK WHERE THEY CAME FROM!

YOU HAVE THE POWER TO LOOK INTO THE FUTURE--AND SEE YOUR OWN DESTINY! LOOK, NOW!

I DO NOT NEED TO LOOK! I TOLD YOU I WOULD CHANGE MY DESTINY TO SUIT MYSELF!

I WARN YOU-- YOU ARE HEADING TOWARD A FEARFUL DOOM!

I GOT RID OF THE CREATURE
AND I GOT RID OF FATE! NOW
I SHALL PROVE WHAT I
CAN DO!



HA! EACH TIME IT BECOMES
EASIER TO PROJECT MY MIND
OUTSIDE OF MY BODY! I HAVE
MUCH TO ACCOMPLISH
TONIGHT!



MOMENTS LATER, AT THE HOSPITAL...

DO YOU INTEND TO
FIRE ME, EH?
NOW I WILL PUT
YOU OUT OF THE
WAY!



I FEEL FUNNY,
COLBY-- LIKE I
DO WHEN THAT
DREADFUL PRO-
FESSOR BLANDIN
IS AROUND!



FATHER! OH, COLBY-- HE
LOOKS AS THOUGH HE'S BEING
STRANGLER!

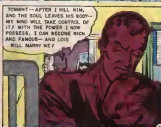


YOUR FATHER
IS DEAD,
LOIS!

AND YOU, TOO, SHALL BE
DEAD BEFORE MORNING,
COLBY FERNAND! I HAVE
GREAT PLANS!



I SHALL KILL COLBY/
THEN I SHALL USE HIS
BODY AS MY OWN, AND
LOIS WILL NEVER KNOW
THAT HER LOVER IS
THE MAN SHE ONCE
DISMISSED!



TOMORROW-- AFTER I KILL HIM,
AND THE SOUL LEAVES HIS BODY--
MY MIND WILL TAKE CONTROL OF
IT! WITH THE POWER I NOW
POSSESS, I CAN BECOME RICH
AND FAMOUS-- AND LOIS
WILL MARRY ME!

I WILL WAIT IN COLBY'S ROOM FOR HIM / I'LL KILL HIM INSTANTLY / BUT THERE IS ONE PROBLEM—MY OWN BODY / I SHALL NOT BE RETURNING TO IT AGAIN, SO WHAT SHALL I DO WITH IT ?



I MUST TAKE MY REGULAR BODY SOMEWHERE AND LEAVE IT, BEFORE MY MIND PRODUCES ITSELF TO COLBY'S ROOM. KILL HIM, AND ENTER HIS BODY / PERHAPS THOSE EYE SPIRITS THAT I SUMMONED BEFORE COULD HELP !



THE THOUGHT HAD NO SOONER GONE THROUGH RANDY'S BRAIN, THAN THE FORCES OF EVIL APPEARED AGAIN.

I—I DID NOT CALL YOU / I JUST THOUGHT ABOUT / VIBRATIONS OF YOUR MIND ARE NOW SUCH, THAT YOUR FANTEST THOUGHT OF US BRINGS US !



WHY SHOULD I BE AFRAID OF YOU ? I HAVE PROVED MY POWER / WHY SHOULDN'T I USE THE SUPER-NATURAL FORCES OF EVIL TO SERVE ME, WHEN I ALONE HAVE LEARNED THE SECRET OF CONTROLLING THEM ?



STAND BACK FROM ME UNTIL I TELL YOU WHAT I WANT DONE / YOUR HEAT—THE FLAMES !

DO NOT DRIVE FROM US, RANDY BLASSON. YOU WILL SOON BE ONE OF US, BECAUSE YOU WISHED TO FOLLOW IN OUR PATH !



YOU LIE / I DO NOT CHOOSE YOUR COMPANY / I ONLY WISHED TO ADD TO MY POWER THROUGH YOU / I WILL NOT NEED YOU / SO GO BACK WHERE YOU CAME FROM !



CREATURES OF THE WORLD OF EVIL, THIS MAN WISHES TO DISPOSE OF HIS BODY / HE HAD IN MIND THAT YOU COULD HELP HIM !

NO / NO !



FOOLISH MORTAL! YOU HAVE
PASSED YOURSELF ON THE MENTAL
POWER YOU HAVE GAINED! WHY
HAVEN'T YOU LEARNED YOU CANNOT
BORROW ANOTHER MAN'S BODY AND
DISPOSE OF

THE FLAMES!
LET ME GO!

YOU WERE STUPID INDEED,
RAMON BLASSON, TO NOT REALIZE
THAT THE BRAIN THAT CONTROLLED
EVERYTHING WAS IN YOUR
OWN BODY, AND IF YOU HAD SUC-
CEEDED IN DESTROYING YOUR OWN
BODY, WHAT POWER YOU
POSSESSED WOULD HAVE
GONE WITH IT!

I - I AM CONCENTRATING! I AM
TRYING TO SEND THESE EVIL
BEINGS BACK INTO THE UNKNOWN
WORLD, BUT THEY WILL NOT
OBEY! MY POWER IS GONE!



NO! NO!

EEEEEE!

TODAY YOU DECIDED TO LEAVE YOUR BODY
AND NOT RETURN TO IT AGAIN! LOOK BEHIND YOU,
RAMON! YOU HAVE LEFT YOUR BODY!

FOOD...
YES, SIR-- WE
HEARD AN AWFUL
SCREAM IN HERE...
AND WHEN WE CAME
RUNNING IN, HE WAS
LIKE THIS-- LIKE HE'D
BEEN SOMETHING
HORRIBLE!

IT MUST
HAVE BEEN
A HEART
ATTACK! HE'S DEAD!

YES, RAMON, I AM READY TO WRITE THE
ENDING TO YOUR STORY! YOU ARE STEP-
PING THROUGH THE PORTALS OF THE
UNKNOWN, WHOSE MYSTERIES YOU DE-
TERMINED TO MASTER! BUT THE ONLY
PORTALS OPEN TO YOU NOW ARE
ETERNAL PUNISHMENT AND
TERROR!

AND SO THE SEEDS OF
RAMON BLASSON'S LIFE
WERE UNRAVELED, AND HE
FOUND THAT FOR SUCH AS
HE, FATE HAD ALREADY
WRITTEN A PAGE IN THE
HEREAFTER! NO MAN
CAN ESCAPE HIS
FATE!

FINIS

THE END

A Hand of FATE #13 *Mystery*

IN THE YEAR 1801, IN THE BRITISH ARMY STATIONED IN INDIA, TWO BROTHERS CAME UPON THE SOULS OF "SIVA" IN A TEMPLE SHRINE. OVERCOME WITH ITS STRANGE BEAUTY, THE TWO MEN BOOP THE IDOL AND SHIPPED IT BACK TO THEIR HOME IN ENGLAND. THE LOSS OF THE TEMPLE WORSHIPPERS' GOD CAUSED GREAT ANGER AND HATRED AMONG THE NATIVES, AND THE TWO BROTHERS WERE FORCED TO FLEE BACK TO ENGLAND. . .

BUT THE SHADOW OF MEN FOLLOWED THEM BACK. ONE NIGHT IN LONDON THEY RECEIVED AN UNEXPECTED VISIT.

I AM RABHA, HIGH PRIEST OF THE TEMPLE FROM WHICH YOU HAVE STOLEN OUR IDOL / I HAVE COME TO TAKE IT BACK /

SORRY, OLD MAN / WE'VE GROWN FOND OF YOUR SIVA, AND WE CAN'T INTEND GIVING HER UP!



YOU DON'T REALIZE THE DANGER YOU ARE IN / SIVA IS THE FOUR-ARMED GODDESS OF CREATION AND DESTRUCTION / HER VENGEANCE UPON YOU WILL BE TERRIBLE!



WHEN THE STRANGE VISITOR LEFT, THE TWO MEN RETIRED FOR THE NIGHT. BUT AN HOUR LATER...



GREAT SCOTT / THAT SOUNDS LIKE FRED! IT'S COMING FROM THE LIBRARY!

WHEN FRED REACHED THE LIBRARY, HE FOUND HIS BROTHER LOCKED IN A DEADLY EMBRACE IN THE ARMS OF SIVA!



FRED! THAT DEVILISH STATUE HAS KILLED HIM / B-BUT HOW COULD IT HAVE COME ALIVE?

THE DEATH OF HIS BROTHER WAS ENOUGH WARNING FOR FRED. HE SILENTLY CRAFTED THE IDOL AND TOOK IT PERSONALLY BACK TO THE TEMPLE IN INDIA. . .

THE VENGEANCE OF SIVA IS DREADFUL, I KNOW, BUT YOU WERE WARNED / YOUR LIFE WILL BE SPARED, NOW THAT SIVA IS BACK WITH US /



MARTIN LEFT INDIA AND RETURNED HOME, STILL IN A DAZE OVER THE AWESOME SERIES OF EVENTS THAT TOOK HIS BROTHER'S LIFE / HE TOLD THE STORY TO MANY PEOPLE TO FIND SOME SORT OF EXPLANATION OF THE IDOL COMING TO LIFE, BUT NONE COULD GIVE A PLAGI-SIBLE ANSWER, SO THE EVENT WAS WRITTEN OFF AS ANOTHER STRANGE TALE IN THE ANNALS OF THE SUPERNATURAL!

VISITOR FROM THE GRAVE

The midjet's coffin was settled against the darkening sky, and the four candles lit at the head and foot of the casket cast flickering shadows over the lone summer foliage. A little distance away, the troupers of the Fennel circus clustered in small groups, discussing in hushed tones this tragedy that had befallen them.

They turned to watch furtively as Gado strode up. They knew he'd borne no love for his midjet twin brother, but they dared not speak to him. They'd tasted his anger and fury before, and now as they looked at his dark-frowed countenance, they feared to break in upon his grief, lest he suddenly burst into violent, uncontrollable anger.

Gado stood a long time before the casket, upward-fall of the circus people around him. He looked on his dead brother's face, and it seemed to him that a slight, malicious smile twisted the corners of the dead midjet's mouth. Involuntarily, Gado stretched out his hand and touched the corpse's face. But it was cold and dead, and he recoiled under the sensation. There was nothing to fear now, he told himself. Gogo was gone, and he could plague him no longer.

Gado turned to go, and then he hesitated. For some reason there seemed to be something missing, something incomplete about the body stretched out there. He turned swiftly back and examined the contents of the casket. What was it, he asked himself. And then the answer came to him. Gogo's baton, the peculiar gaunted staff with the heavy head of wrought silver was missing.

It had been their father's, and he had given it to Gogo because his fondness was greater for that misshapen, strange replica of his other son. Gado was sure he'd given the baton to the undertaker with careful instructions that it was to be placed in the casket with Gogo, but now it was not in evidence.

"Shall we close the coffin now?"

Gado whirled at the softly spoken words. Keel, the strong man of the circus, stood at his side.

"No," Gado ordered. "You are to touch nothing until I return."

Through some permission that he could not define, Gado hurried back to the tent he'd shared with Gogo. He brushed past the gathering shadows on the foliage and entered the tent and turned on the lamp.

There, gleaming dully in the light lay the baton. Fear for the first time coursed through him as he looked at the object. It lay there carefully, as though it had been tossed down, and though he could not be sure he'd forgotten it, Gado knew he had not left

it there.

He walked over and picked up the staff, and as he did so, he seemed to hear again his father's warning words. "I know that you and Gogo have no fondness for each other, but remember, Gado, treat your brother well, for what befalls one will befall the other."

Now Gogo was dead, and Gado knew fear. Quickly though, the remembrance faded, and Gado turned back to the baton. He strode past the circus people, ignoring their frightened faces, and went up to the coffin. There he placed the baton in Gogo's hand, tearing apart the stiffened fingers and then letting them clutch tightly around the rod.

"Close the coffin now," he said angrily. "Don't waste more time, but nail it down well. Come, let us get this over with!"

Immediately he started to force the lid down. It seemed to him that Gogo's hand tightened around the baton, but then the lid was snapped shut and he couldn't be sure.

They rolled the lid-down and lowered it into the grave, Gado stood there until the grave was filled, and then he made his way back to his tent.

It was done now, he thought. It was over with. No more would Gogo plague him, humiliate him and minimize his greatness by being what he was—a hideous replica of Gado. Now Gado was alone to carry on the fame of their father—the greatest of the circus performers. Never again would he have to share honors with his stunted gargoyles brother in their tight-rope act. Gado, and Gado alone would carry on the glorious tradition of their family.

Yes, he thought, it had been worth it. Just one slight twist of the tight rope while he and Gogo were doing their act; a slight movement he'd prepared himself for, and Gogo had gone plunging to the ground, the silver-headed baton flying wide in his fall. His neck had been broken, and he'd looked like a broken doll as he'd lain on the dirt floor of the flag.

But now Gado couldn't sleep, and finally he left the deserted camp and went outside. He felt himself drawn to the circus arena, and finally he stood there near where Gogo had fallen. He looked upward toward the tight rope, and he was filled with the pride of his matchless feat. No one except Gogo could ever equal him—and now Gogo was dead.

Gado started climbing up to the platform, suddenly filled with the need to walk out on that rope even if there was no one present to watch him. He

wanted to walk out to the middle of it, and find himself the unequalled tight-rope performer of Hungary.

He was panting slightly when he reached the platform, and he stopped a moment to rest. All around him the night was quiet and peaceful. Finally he was ready, and he placed one foot out upon the rope.

"He'd gone" no farther when he drew back with alarm, his body tossed as far some unexpected blow. Under his foot he'd felt the rope tremble as though someone else walked upon that wire. His sensitive feet, trained all his life, had caught the movement and the vibration—the delicate leaning of the stand as someone stepped and balanced upon it.

He peered across the darkness. As his eyes became accustomed to the night, he could see nothing—the opposite platform and the wire were empty, and still beneath his touch he heard the awful approach.

Beads of perspiration broke out across his forehead as he began to struggle down the ladder. Whatever it was, whatever diabolical trick his imagination was playing upon him, he knew he could not cling to the other side that night.

In the morning the camp came slowly to life. Gado came outside into the fresh countryside, and the air smelled good. What had happened the night before seemed strange to him in the light of day. But still unwilling to admit his fancy had played tricks upon him, he walked out to Gogo's grave. The rich brown, upturned earth was packed firmly into a mound just as he had left it the night before, and it was evident that no one had touched it. Reassured then, he strolled back to the camp site.

He knew he must play the part of a grieving man, and this countermeasure was wiser as he ate with the others. But his thoughts tumbled inwardly to the excitement of that afternoon's performance. He heard in his ears again the acclaim of the audience. The show had been well advertised, and he knew that soon people would flock in from the provinces to see him.

As soon as he could, he hurried back to his tent and purposed his clothes. He dressed himself in the elegant white satin and the embroidered red jacket. Then he added a black sash—in memory of Gogo, he thought wryly.

He was ready then, and he marched forth. As he headed toward the arena, the maestro Ferenc hurried over to him. He placed a gentle, warning hand on Gado's arm.

"Gado," he said, "There is no need for you to perform that afternoon. The news of your brother's death has spread, and people will understand if you do not go on."

For a moment Gado was choked with rage and disappointment at the thought of being shunned on the moment of triumph when he could at last perform alone. But then he gained control of himself.

"It is all right," he answered. "Gado knows that circus people cannot afford themselves the luxury of grief. That I will avenge for my house alone."

Ferenc mapped his forehead worriedly. "All right, Gado, if you feel able to. But if you wish to wait a while to recover, we will understand."

After he left, Gado continued to the arena. He saw approvingly the large crowd. Fools, he thought contemptuously. They will have seen nothing until they saw Gado perform.

Slowly Gado climbed the ladder up to the platform. Then he looked down. Far below him were the frightened, awestruck people. Far below were the simple, strutting clowns and circus animals. Up here, close to the stars was Gado—and he alone, powerful and fearless.

He heard the blaring of the trumpets faintly from the ground. He knew it was heralding his act. Not looking down or to the right or to the left, Gado started across the rope. The moment of triumph would come when he reached the middle and did his daring somersault.

Carefully he put one foot in front of the other. He was nearing the middle of the rope when he felt it, the slight trembling underneath his feet even when he stood still, balancing carefully. He was afraid to look up, and yet he knew he must although he knew what he would see.

He brought his eyes straight in front of him, and he saw Gogo coming toward him. His red-girt brother's face was lighted with that same malicious smile he had last seen when he'd closed the coffin, and Gogo carried his head at that broken angle. In his hand he clutched the twisted baton.

"Was for me, Gado," Gogo called across the intervening space. "You cannot perform without me."

"Go back," Gado shouted furiously to the dead man. "Go back or I'll be killed!"

But Gogo came slowly toward Gado. For a moment Gado stood frozen with horror, and then as Gogo drew close to him, Gogo stretched out the baton to touch him. It was then it happened. Gado tried frantically to avoid the contact of the awful thing, and as he twisted away he fell.

The shocked crowds below saw only Gado lose his balance and fall. They also heard his awful scream and the wailing. "No!" as he hit the ground and lay there motionless.

The circus performers rushed to the scene immediately. Gado lay there a lifeless, broken thing as they approached him. His head was held peculiarly at an angle that indicated his neck had snapped. And clutched in Gado's hand they saw the twisted baton with the silver wrought head that had so carefully been placed in Gogo's coffin!

THE END

Devilish Dolls of DEATH

WOLFE FARMAN WAS IN VIENNA ON A SCHOLARSHIP, TAKING A POST GRADUATE COURSE IN MEDICINE. WHEN ON EVERY NIGHT, A YOUNG GERMAN SCIENTIST, TOLD HIM HE COULD RENT A ROOM FROM HIS AUNT, WHO RAN A DOLL SHOP IN ONE OF THE QUAINY OLD SECTIONS OF THE TOWN. IT BOARDED LIKE A PERFECT SET-UP. BUT FROM THE BEGINNING, WOLFE FELT THAT SOME SOMETHING POWER DWELT AMONG THE DOLLS, ALTHOUGH HE WAS CONVINCED THAT FEAR HAD SOME STRANGE SUB-PRIDE IN STORE. . .

GOOD EVENING, FRAU TRUFEL / DO YOU HAPPEN TO KNOW WHERE MISS NOVAL MIGHT BE? I HAVEN'T SEEN HER AROUND FOR SEVERAL DAYS /

I CANNOT KEEP TRACK OF ALL MY ROOMERS, HEER FARMAN / THEY GO AND COME AS THEY PLEASE /

THIS DOLL / WHY, IT'S A PERFECT IMAGE OF CAROLE NOVAL /

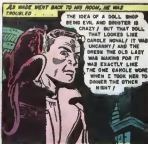
TO BE SURE / OTTO, MY HUSBAND, IS AN ARTIST / PEOPLE COME FROM ALL OVER TO HAVE DOLLS MADE IN THEIR OWN LIKENESSES / FRAULEIN NOVAL ORDERED THIS ONE SPECIALLY MADE /

YOUR DOLLS ARE CERTAINLY LIFE-LIKE, EVEN THE HORRIBLE ONES / THEY SEEM TO STARE, ALMOST THREATENINGLY / AND THIS ONE SEEMED TO FIX ITS EYES UPON ME, ALMOST AS IF IT WERE TRYING TO TELL ME SOMETHING /



YOU HAVE A VIVID IMAGINATION!
NOW IF YOU WILL EXCUSE ME--
I HAVE MUCH WORK AMONG THE
DOLLS, AND A LIVING TO MAKE!

SORRY TO
HAVE
BOtherED
YOU, FRAU
TEUFEL!



AS MADE MYSELF BACK TO MY ROOM, HE WAS
TROUBLED

THE IDEA OF A DOLL SHOP
BEING EVIL AND SINISTER IS
CRAZY! BUT THAT DOLL
THAT LOOKED LIKE
CAROLE MORAL! IT WAS
UNCANNY! AND THE
DRESS THE OLD LADY
WAS MAKING FOR IT
WAS EXACTLY LIKE
THE ONE CAROLE WORE
WHEN I TOOK HER TO
DANCE THE OTHER
NIGHT!



JUST A FEW BLOCKS AWAY THERE ARE MODERN
SHOPS, NIGHTS AND GAIETY. BUT TO THE LEFT
OF THE MAIN THOROUGHFARES, YOU COULD FIND
YOURSELF IN A LABYRINTH OF SMALL OLD
STREETS, AND IT IS HERE, IN A PLACE WHERE
YOU WOULD LEAST EXPECT TO FIND IT, THAT
MONSTROUS AND WHISTLY BEES ARE BORN!



IN AN UNDERGROUND ROOM BEHIND THE
DOLL SHOP

LIKE SOME OF THE OTHERS, LIFE IS NOT
QUITE OUT OF YOUR BODY YET, CAROLE MORAL.
SO YOU WILL SUFFER EVEN MORE UNTIL YOU
LEARN TO DO OUR WILL! IT IS UNFORTUNATE
THAT YOU STUMBLED UPON OUR SECRET
OF DOLL-MAKING!



SINCE YOU ALWAYS PREFERRED THE COMPANY OF
WIDE FARMAN TO MINE, I SHALL GIVE YOU THE
PLEASURE OF BRINGING HIM INTO OUR BAKES! BY
TOMORROW NIGHT, UNCLE OTTO WILL HAVE FINISHED
THE DOLL THAT WILL BECOME WIDE FARMAN! NOW,
MUNT FROHM--UNCLE OTTO--GIVE CAROLE
ANOTHER LESSON IN OBEDIENCE!

WE SHALL
WORKED, DEAR
EVERS!
HEE HEE!



EEEEOWWWWWW!
NO! NO!
NO MORE!
I WILL DO AS
YOU DO!







MY POWER TO COMMUNICATE WITH YOU WILL SOON BE GONE, WAGE--AND I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN I WAS BEYOND SAVING! BUT YOU MUST SAVE YOURSELF! YOU MUST GO BACK AND GET THE DOLL OF YOU, WHICH OTTO IS MAKING!

CAROLE--I STILL DON'T UNDERSTAND THIS HORRIBLE THING!

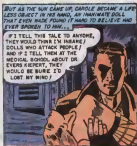


THAT DEVIL DOLL WHO BETRADES US--AND SOME OF THE OTHER HORRIBLE DOLLS--ARE SPIRITS THAT HAVE NEVER INHABITED A BODY, AND ARE WILLING TO DWELL IN WHATEVER FORMS THE TEUFELS AND EVILS GIVE THEM! THEY ARE WORSE THAN THOSE OF US WHO ARE TAKEN FROM OUR HUMAN FORMS, AND TORTURED UNTIL WE LEARN TO DO THE EVIL REQUIRED OF US, AND HAVE NO MORE SOULS!



YOU MUST... MUST...

YES, CAROLE--WHAT MUST I DO?



BUT AS THE SUN CAME UP, CAROLE BECAME A LIFE-LESS OBJECT IN HIS HAND, AN INANIMATE DOLL THAT EVEN WAGE FOUND IT HARD TO BELIEVE HAD EVER BELONGED TO HIM...

IF I TELL THIS TALE TO ANYONE, THEY WOULD THINK I'M INSANE! DOLLS WHO ATTACK PEOPLE! AND IF I TELL THEM AT THE MEDICAL SCHOOL ABOUT DR. EVERS' REPORT, THEY WOULD BE SURE I'D LOST MY MIND!



MEANWHILE, BACK IN OTTO TEUFEL'S WORKSHOP...

HURRY, UNCLE OTTO! BY TOMORROW WE MUST HAVE THE DOLL READY, SO WAGE FARRAR CAN BECOME ANOTHER OF OUR SOULLESS SLAVES!



WHILE UNCLE OTTO FINISHES FARRAR'S DOLL, WE WILL TORTURE THE REBELLIOUS SPIRIT OUT OF YOU, CAROLE HONAL! BY THE TIME YOUR DOLL RETURNS TO US, YOU WILL BE AS OBEISANT AS THE OTHERS, AND YOU'LL REGRET YOU EVER SPURNED MY LOVE!



IN DESPERATION, WAGE RETURNED TO THE DOLL SHOP...

I'VE GOT TO SEE THIS THING THROUGH! I'M GOING TO GET MY CLOTHES--TAKE A LOOK AT THE DOLL OTTO IS MAKING OF ME--AND SEE WHAT I CAN DO!

WAKE UP! UPSTAIRS TO THE ROOM
PACKED HIS CLOTHES, AND DRESSED
HIMSELF QUICK, WITH CAREFUL'S
SOUL STILL IN HIS POCKET, HE
RETURNED TO OTTO'S WORKSHOP.



OH-- SO
IT'S YOU!

HELP!!!

THAT'S ONE DOLL
YOU AREN'T GONNA
BE FINISH, OTTO!



MAY WE WERE
EXPECTING YOU,
MY FRIEND!



WEE! WEE!



OWWW!

WEE!
WEE!
WEE!



THE DOLL OF THE GIRL WAS
IN HIS POCKET/NOW TOGETHER
THEY CAN LEARN WHAT IT
MEANS TO TRY AND
OUTWIT ME!

AND BELIEVE ME,
DEAR AUNT, THEY
SMALL LEARN!



WHICH WERE RETAINED CONSCIOUSNESS, HE FOUND
HIMSELF IMPRISONED IN A LOCK UP THAT HE COULD
NOT MOVE.

YOU HAVE SEEN ME PERFORM
EXPERIMENTS IN THE LABORATORY, MADE
PARANAL, BUT IN YOUR STUPIDITY YOU NEVER
DREAMED THAT I HAD LEARNED TO
TRANSLATE HUMAN SOULS
INTO DOLLS!



NOW YOU ARE ABOUT TO
WAKE THAT IS MY GREAT
ACHIEVEMENT! WHAT A
PITY THAT YOU WILL
NOT BE ABLE TO
ENJOY IT!



ALL OF THESE BODIES AROUND YOU ARE THE VICTIMS MY CLIENTS SENT TO ME! A MAN WILL PAY PLENTY TO RID HIMSELF OF A RATED RIVAL FOR LOVE OR MONEY!

DO YOU THINK YOU CAN GET AWAY WITH THIS FOREVER, EVER?



THAT IS JUST A TASTE! FIRST, YOU SHALL SEE THE PUNISHMENT OF CAROLE! THEN I SHALL GIVE YOU THE WHIP THAT PUTS YOU IN THE TRANCE-LIKE STATE THAT SHALL BE YOURS UNTIL YOUR DEATH! YOU FEEL--AND YOU KNOW--YOU SUFFER--BUT YOU DO NOT LIVE!

WE SHALL BRING THE DOLLS TO HELP WITH THE TORTURE!



AS EVER, PREPARED TO LASH CAROLE, WADE, IMPULSED, STRUGGLED IN HIS BOX AND SUDDELY DISCOVERED THAT IN HIS RUSH, HE'D HAD NOT PUT UP TIGHTENED AS TIGHTLY AS HE SHOULD...

THE WHIPS OF THE DOLLS ARE FILLED WITH A POISON THAT SENDS UNBEARABLE TORTURE THROUGH THE BODY! THEY ENJOY USING THEM!

THE BOX IS BREAKEN!



THEN, BREAKING OUT OF HIS BOX, WADE GRABBED ONE OF THE TORTURE STICKS AND SPRANG AT EYERS



AS THE LAST BREATH OF LIFE LEFT EYERS, THE DOLLS SUDDENLY DROPPED WITHOUT POWER, AND FEELING THE POISONED LASH, THE FELLOWS FELL LIFELESS!

EYAH!!

EOWWW!

A TASTE OF YOUR OWN MEDICINE!

WITH THE EVIL POWER THAT HAD MADE THEM LIVE, NOW DESTROYED, THE DOLLS HAD BECOME IN-ANIMATE CREATURES AGAIN! THE BODIES FROM WHICH THEY HAD DRAWH LIFE NOW BECAME NOTHING, AND WHEN WADE FINALLY FREED CAROLE, HE REALIZED HE WAS TOO LATE!



POOR CAROLE! BUT AT LEAST YOU ARE AT PEACE! NO EVIL POWER CAN FORCE YOUR SPIRIT TO BE A SLAVE TO ITS CRUEL WISHES! AND ALL THOSE OTHERS--THEY TOO ARE FREED AT LAST!

THE END

Goose? or Nest?

WHICH WILL YOU HAVE ?

For some reason, the goose egg stands for zero ... nothing.

The nest egg, however, stands for a tidy sum of money, set aside for your own or your children's future.

It's hardly necessary to ask you which you'd prefer.

But it is necessary to ask yourself what you are doing to make sure you don't end up with a goose egg instead of a nest egg ten years from now.

The simple, easy, and obvious thing to do is to buy U. S. Savings Bonds.

Buy them regularly, automatically, on a

plan that pays for them out of the month-to-month income you make today.

Millions of Americans have adopted this practically painless way to save up a nice nest egg for the needs and wants of the future.

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